

## Chapter 1

# Lydney

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Lydney is located on the A.48 and close to the River Severn. It is the main town serving the southern part of the south Forest, with a wide catchment area including several large settlements, such as Bream. It is a principal settlement in Structure Plan terms. It has a large employment base and the town centre contains a larger number of retail and commercial premises than the other three towns of the District. Its immediate population is 8950 (2001) and its catchment population is estimated as being around 20,000. The principal north-south routes serving the south Forest intersect with the A.48 at Lydney. Lydney, therefore, is both a principal centre of economic activity in the District, and is a communications focus. It also contains the only main line railway station in the District, on the Cardiff-Birmingham route.
- 1.2 The earliest evidence of settlement at Lydney is from the Roman period when there was an important temple complex at Lydney Park as well as settlement on the site of the existing town close to a major Roman road. The medieval town was a market centre and a port, the latter role continuing into the early 20th century. Archaeological evidence of these earlier periods of the settlement's history survives beneath the site of the modern town and in the surrounding area.
- 1.3 Lydney has a well-developed industrial base, principally located to the south and the south west of the town, on the lower lying land, which leads down to the River Severn. There are a number of large employers in the rubber, paper and engineering sectors.
- 1.4 Lydney has a strong advantage in comparison with other towns of the south Forest in that it has better accessibility by both road and rail. The A.48 route through Lydney connects with the M.48 near Chepstow and with Gloucester and the M.5 motorway. The recent completion of the Lydney bypass has removed some traffic from the town centre. However, many locally generated trips and those with an origin or destination in the central part of the District use the B.4231 and the B.4234, both of which have junctions in the town centre. The effect is that high volumes of traffic movement remain in High Street/Hill Street/Newerne Street (the principal shopping area), to the detriment of the town centre environment. An issue for the Plan is to propose measures to improve the town centre environment by managing traffic movements in the area. The only rail station in the District is at Lydney. An issue for the Plan is to develop the use of this facility for both passenger and freight traffic.
- 1.5 There are a number of physical constraints, as well as opportunities, for development in Lydney.
- 1.6 An important constraint relates to the issue of flooding. A large part of Lydney is situated on generally low-lying land adjacent to the River Severn. A number of watercourses pass through Lydney to the Severn. In adverse circumstances flooding within the built-up area can occur. Various measures have been implemented or are planned including river management and flood defence. Nevertheless, particular care is required that development must be carefully located, and a full range of surface water management measures implemented, as an integral part of development to ensure flooding neither affects the development concerned, nor elsewhere in Lydney.
- 1.7 The northern part of the town has developed on steeply rising land. The undeveloped areas within and around this part of the town are generally situated in elevated and exposed positions. Any new development in these locations would need to be carefully planned and sited so as to minimise intrusion into highly visible open areas.
- 1.8 The low-lying land round Lydney is of high agricultural land quality, principally used for dairy farming. Wherever possible such land should remain undeveloped.

- 1.9 The Severn Estuary is a designated Ramsar site, a Special Protection Area and a proposed Special Area of Conservation. The adjoining coastal area also is subject to protection as a designated Coastal Zone within the Plan. These designations will limit development potential in the area adjoining the Severn.
- 1.10 However, there remain areas within and adjoining Lydney where further development on a significant scale can be allocated, both for employment and for housing. In this respect Lydney differs greatly from Cinderford and Coleford, both of which have greater development constraints. The principal opportunity lies to the east of Lydney, relating to undeveloped land contained within the Lydney bypass, together with the opportunity for development outside and adjoining the bypass. The capacity of these locations, together with other more limited sites elsewhere in Lydney, can provide for a scale of development which will make a major contribution to the revitalisation strategy for the District. There is also the possibility that further capacity may exist to provide for development at Lydney beyond the end of the Plan period, should a future Plan review indicate such a requirement.

### **Development Strategy**

- 1.11 The revitalisation strategy for the District proposes significant additional levels of employment and housing land allocations. The strategy identifies Lydney as the principal strategic development location in the District with the potential to accommodate a large part of the proposed new development. The principal reasons are that:
- Lydney already has a well developed commercial, retail and industrial base
  - It has good communications, the best in the District
  - There is suitable land available which is readily capable of development on the scale under consideration
  - There is the ability to integrate development of such sites with the existing urban form
  - There is the opportunity offered by large scale development to underpin and further develop the role and functioning of the town and the town centre for the benefit of both existing and new occupants
  - There is potential for further development beyond the end of the Plan period should that be considered desirable at a future Plan Review.
- 1.12 The development strategy for Lydney therefore proposes the allocation of 36.8 hectares of employment land and around 1308 dwellings. It is forecast that the population of Lydney will increase significantly over the Plan period, giving rise to additional economically active people.
- 1.13 The Plan strategy emphasises a requirement to provide for a balance of employment opportunity and new population, particularly in the principal development locations (the towns), in order to minimise the number and distance of private car journeys and maximise accessibility to jobs and services. A core element of the strategy for Lydney therefore is to seek to ensure that a range of employment land and site opportunities are available within the Plan period to meet the needs of the existing and new economically active population. Such sites must include good quality, viable and accessible locations which will be attractive for both locally derived business investment and inward investment.
- 1.14 The overall Plan strategy for the revitalisation of the District, particularly the south Forest, is strongly dependant upon securing such planned employment growth opportunities. Within this framework Lydney is considered to offer the principal opportunity for new business investment. It is likely that the housing land allocations in the Plan will be developed over time, even if the new job opportunities were not to be forthcoming. Should this occur, the effect would be to greatly increase the level of out-

commuting from Lydney, which would be a wholly unsustainable outcome, would have limited benefits for Lydney itself and the District as a whole, and would potentially undermine the overall Plan strategy.

- 1.15 The Plan therefore must ensure maximum opportunity for new jobs to be provided over the Plan period. A range of employment sites will be allocated to provide choice. The Council will require a legal agreement as part of a planning permission for large scale housing development to provide for the overall availability of a minimum of 9 hectares of serviced employment land. The aim will be to secure the strategic aim of balancing planned housing and job growth over the Plan period. Such provision should include good quality, accessible, viable and attractive sites for business use. In addition, the Plan will provide for other employment opportunities, particularly in the town centre.
- 1.16 The phasing of development of the Plan's housing sites will be in accordance with the need to ensure that previously developed land has priority. In addition, the completion of dwellings on the major site at Lydney is to be linked to the provision of employment land. The Plan strategy for Lydney will contain a regulating policy for housing development for land to the east of Lydney. Development will be limited to a maximum of 400 dwellings in the first stage. A second and final stage will be permitted only if an agreement has been secured to provide the requisite employment land, or it has been otherwise secured. The policy will enable an early Review of the Local Plan if it appears that the agreement sought will not be forthcoming, or that no other realistic and viable proposals for employment land provision are available. Such a Plan Review would focus on the viability of the revitalisation strategy for the District, and for Lydney, in the absence of a sufficient and available choice of employment land in Lydney. The Review would consider the desirability of continuing the revitalisation strategy in the form expressed in this Plan, and whether the outcomes observed would provide for a sustainable form of development.
- 1.17 The proposals for housing and employment development in Lydney are forecast to lead to additional potential for town centre commercial, retail and service investment to provide for the new population and businesses. Policies and proposals for the town centre will provide for such development to take place. There are a number of sites in the town centre with potential for retail development which have not yet been implemented. A 2,500m<sup>2</sup> supermarket on the High Street was completed in 2001.
- 1.18 There will be a need to implement an integrated sustainable transport network in Lydney to cater for the increased travel needs arising from the proposed new development. A key element of the Lydney strategy will be to ensure that the new development is well-related to the existing urban form, particularly in terms of a choice of modes of convenient access to key trip attractors such as the town centre, employment areas and schools.
- 1.19 At present the town centre experiences high volumes of traffic. The impact of the proposed new development would exacerbate this situation. Without ameliorative measures, the additional trips generated are predicted to exceed the capacity of a number of junctions in the town centre, and unacceptably add to existing problems of environmental intrusion and pedestrian-vehicle conflict in the town centre. This would militate against the objective of seeking new commercial investment in the town centre.
- 1.20 The strategy for Lydney will propose a highway and traffic management scheme designed to produce a more sustainable transport network which will mitigate the impact of the new development. It will also provide for pedestrian priority to be implemented in Newerne Street as part of the proposed transport network, which will enhance the potential for increased town centre vitality and viability.

### **Housing**

- 1.21 Between 1992 and the end of 1998 a total of around 690 dwellings were completed in Lydney, an average of around 85 per year. The highest level of completions was in 1998, totalling 200. The principal contribution to this high level of activity was made by two large sites, at Highfield Hill (336 dwellings) and Dairy Farm (143 dwellings). Both are now completed. At January 2004 there were outstanding consents for 59 dwellings in Lydney.

- 1.22 It is proposed to allocate land for 1308 dwellings in Lydney over the Plan period, principally on land to the east of Lydney.

**Mixed Use Land Allocation - East of Lydney**

(R)F.Lydney 1  
 65 hectares of land to the east of Lydney will be allocated for a mixed development comprising 1250 dwellings to be completed over the Plan period, with 600 in phase 2 and 650 in phase 3, 9 hectares of land for employment use, a neighbourhood centre and primary school accommodation. Commencement of the development will not be permitted until agreement has been reached with the Council on a comprehensive development scheme for the whole site. The allocation will be subject to a regulating policy as provided for in Policy (R)F.Lydney 2. The development will be required to provide for the following:

1. Within eighteen months of the commencement of the residential development the completion of works to provide a minimum of 5 hectares of serviced land suitable and available for employment use and an agreement for the phased provision of the remaining 4 hectares
2. Off-site highway improvement works, to be agreed with the local planning authority and the local highway authority, including the provision of town centre highway improvements
3. Enhanced bus services, to and from the site and pedestrian and cycling routes linking the development site to the principal trip attractors within Lydney, to be agreed with the local planning authority and the local highway authority
4. Primary school accommodation within or adjoining the site appropriately located to meet the needs of the occupants of the site and subject to a phasing agreement to provide that sufficient accommodation is available when it is needed.
5. The allocation of a site within the development for a neighbourhood centre, and a phasing agreement for the construction of units suitable for accommodating local services
6. Strategic landscaping within the site, including noise attenuation measures adjacent to the Lydney bypass
7. Amenity open space and play provision within the site, retaining existing definitive rights of way where possible and diverting them where necessary to retain links to adjacent footpaths
8. An appropriate provision of affordable housing units
9. Appropriate measures to ensure that flooding does not occur as a result of the new development
10. Appropriate contributions to pre-school and secondary school provision to meet the needs of occupants of the site
11. Appropriate contribution to the provision of, or improvement of an existing, community building to meet the needs of occupants of the site
12. Appropriate contribution to Lydney Library to meet the needs of site occupants
13. Appropriate contribution to improved passenger facilities at Lydney Rail Station
14. Appropriate contribution to the provision or improvement of playing pitch facilities in Lydney
15. Appropriate contribution to Health Care provision in Lydney

The site will be expected to be developed during phases 2 and 3 of the Local Plan period providing approximately 600 dwellings in phase 2 (2003-07) and 650 in phase 3 (2008-11). All of the allocation in phase 2 shall be provided in Area A on the plan

- 1.23 The above policy provides for 600 dwellings in Phase 2 of the Plan (2003-2007) and 650 in Phase 3 (2008-2011). During Phase 2 in addition the primary school provision, neighbourhood centre and off site highway improvements (including the town centre improvements) will be commenced and the initial 5 hectares of serviced employment land will be made available.

- 1.24 The effect of Policy (R)F.Lydney 2 will be to ensure that no more than 400 dwellings will be permitted to be constructed without secure agreement for the provision of 9 hectares of employment land.
- 1.25 The site allocated by the above policy is of significant size. As such the provisions of the policy are complex as there is a need to provide guidance on the principal elements of the overall form of the development, together with the mitigation measures required to address the related impacts arising. A detailed development brief has been prepared for the allocation, as supplementary planning guidance.
- 1.26 The allocated site may be capable of accommodating more than 1,250 dwellings. However, planning permission will limit dwelling completions over the Plan period to 1,250 units, with further development being subject to a future review of the Plan. Within this overall provision there will be a number of affordable units, to be negotiated, and the bulk of these are likely to be housing for rent.
- 1.27 A key issue is to secure arrangements for the provision of serviced and available land for employment use, and at an early stage in the site development. This will contribute significantly to the opportunities for jobs to be provided in locations conveniently accessible to new residents, and to Lydney generally. Without such arrangements there could be a significant risk that the Local Plan strategy would be compromised. Policy (R)F.Lydney 2 proposes a phasing policy which will enable the local planning authority to phase development to regulate a review of progress on securing this strategic objective.
- 1.28 The allocation policy requires that 9 hectares of land suitable for employment purposes should be provided. It is envisaged that around 5 hectares of the employment land required can be provided close to the proposed major access to the bypass near Crump Farm and the Neighbourhood centre, this may include a proportion of commercial development provided it does not detract from the viability of the town centre. The remaining land, is shown as an allocation close to the Foundry.
- 1.29 An analysis of transport movements in Lydney has been undertaken incorporating the travel needs arising from the new development. This has identified the need for off-site mitigation measures, particularly in relation to the town centre. Therefore the development, along with other developments in the Lydney area, will be required to contribute to the following highway improvements:
- The Newerne Street link road, including Forest Road/Hill Street Junction improvements
  - Carriageway and footpath widening at Albert Street
  - Bream Road/Hill Street junction improvements
  - Traffic management measures on Church Road
  - Junction improvements at Albert Road/Highfield Road and at Naas Road/Highfield Road
  - Junction improvements at Lydney Bypass/Highfield Road
  - Subsidised bus services, and pedestrian and cycle routes linking the development to key trip attractors within Lydney.
- 1.30 A comprehensive development scheme for the whole allocation will be required to be agreed prior to any development, together with a S.106 agreement incorporating undertakings relating to the matters in the above policy.
- 1.31 The overall development form is set out in greater detail in a development brief. A principal feature of the development will be a continuous spine road through the site, linking a junction at Highfield Hill with a junction to the Lydney bypass near Federal Mogul. One further junction will be provided onto the Bypass north of Naas Lane. A neighbourhood centre will be located in the vicinity of the existing buildings comprising Crump Farm. The neighbourhood centre should provide for suitable units of

accommodation for local shops and services, and provide sufficient land to enable uses such as a pub/restaurant, hotel or community building to be located. New primary school accommodation will be required to meet the needs of the prospective site occupiers. This will be located in close proximity to the existing Severn Banks Primary School.

#### **Regulation of Development - Land to the East of Lydney**

##### **(R)F.Lydney 2**

The development of land allocated by Policy (R)F.Lydney 1 will be staged. Stage 1 will be limited to a maximum of 400 dwellings. A second and final stage of residential development will be permitted only when a secure agreement is in place to implement the employment land provisions of Policy (R)F.Lydney 1.

- 1.32 The foregoing section outlining the development strategy for Lydney identified the strategic requirement to ensure that employment land opportunities should be created at an early stage in relation to housing land development at Lydney. Lydney is the key strategic development opportunity in the District. Failure to secure arrangements for employment development at Lydney would be likely to result in an unsustainable form of development with increased long distance out-commuting for work. It would also significantly affect the overall revitalisation strategy for the south Forest, and the District as a whole.
- 1.33 If for any reason a planning permission is secured enabling residential development to commence on the site without the prior securing of an agreement to implement the employment land provisions of Policy (R)F.Lydney 1, then the local planning authority will limit the scale of residential development to 400 dwellings. In the above circumstances the Council would commence an immediate review of the Local Plan strategy and consider whether it would require amendment.

#### **Housing Allocation - Holms Farm**

##### **(R)F.Lydney 3**

1.7 hectares of land at Holms Farm will be allocated for around 20 dwellings. The development will be required to:

1. Have a single point of vehicular access
2. Provide for safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling links to the town centre
3. Provide for amenity open space and play space within the site
4. Provide for the retention of the existing farmhouse and other substantial buildings where suitable for conversion
5. Provide for an appropriate number of affordable housing units
6. Provide an appropriate contribution to educational provision for the prospective occupiers of the site
7. Provide an appropriate contribution to the improvement of playing pitch facilities in Lydney.
8. Provide an appropriate contribution to improved passenger facilities at Lydney Railway Station.
9. Provide an appropriate contribution to Lydney Library to meet the needs of the site's occupants.
10. Provide an appropriate contribution to off-site town centre highway improvement works.

- 1.34 The allocation is well located in relation to the town centre, and to other services. The site comprises land and buildings within a former dairy farm. There is potential to relocate the farm operations and thereby to release the site for residential development. Access to the site is currently restricted. There will be only one vehicular access to the site which will be from Temple Way West to the north of the site, and to ensure a satisfactory access it may be necessary to undertake work on land not within the site boundary. Careful consideration should be given to the setting of the development in the landscape.

#### Housing Allocation - Allaston

(R)F.Lydney 4

0.31 hectares of land at Allaston will be allocated 10 dwellings. The development will be required to:

1. Provide for strategic landscaping to the site boundaries, and within the site, incorporating existing landscape features where appropriate
2. Provide for safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links to the surrounding highway network, to the town centre and to the primary school
3. Provide for pedestrian access to footpaths adjoining the site
4. Provide an appropriate contribution to educational provision for the prospective occupiers of the site
5. Provide an appropriate contribution to enhanced bus services to link the site to the town centre
6. Provide an appropriate contribution to the improvement of playing pitch facilities in Lydney.

- 1.35 The above site is a small area having a frontage onto Court road from which it should gain access. It is considered suitable for approximately 10 dwellings the development of which may be expected to contribute to local infrastructure in proportion to the scale of the site.

#### Housing Allocation - Kings Buildings (Hill Street South)

(R)F.Lydney 5

0.44 hectares of land south of Hill Street will be allocated for 18 dwellings. The development will be required to:

1. Provide for safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links to the surrounding highway network, to the town centre
2. Provide for pedestrian access to footpaths adjoining the site
3. Provide for an appropriate number of affordable housing units
4. Provide an appropriate contribution to educational provision for the prospective occupiers of the site.

- 1.36 The above site lies within an area of the town centre that has been developed for a variety of purposes but is in part under used. It is capable of providing a number of dwellings in close proximity to the centre and will enable the site to be used more fully. It is proposed to allocate the land for approximately 18 units. The site is suited to the provision of smaller units, possibly in the form of flats. It may be that there will be some scope for the development of the allocated site to extend beyond the boundary of the allocation to provide a slightly larger development than that allocated.

#### Mixed Use Site - Hill Street

(R)F.Lydney 6

0.17ha of land at Hill Street is allocated for residential development of approximately 10 dwellings. The development will be required to provide for adequate site access and the mitigation of any traffic impacts arising from the development of the site and appropriate contributions toward education, open space, library facilities and the implementation of environmental improvements in Hill Street.

- 1.37 This site comprises an underused area of land between the frontage buildings and a builder's merchants. Its town centre location makes it suitable for a more intensive residential development. The existing vehicular access is limited in width but could accommodate additional development with improvement. A contribution will be sought towards implementing environmental improvements in Hill Street and any necessary mitigation of the traffic impact of the development together with a contribution to educational and other provision necessary to meet the need of the occupiers.

## Employment

- 1.38 The revitalisation strategy for the District identifies Lydney as the key strategic opportunity for new employment development. The strategy therefore requires that substantial employment site opportunities should be allocated in Lydney. It is important that accessible, viable and attractive sites for employment use should be identified, and that a choice of sites should exist so as not to limit the potential for employment land to come forward over the Plan period. The principal requirement in implementing the above approach is to ensure the allocation of high quality sites, capable both of attracting technology and service based (commercial) businesses as well as other B2 and B8 businesses, and of sufficient size to provide for large scale business investment should the opportunity arise.
- 1.39 Sites with the above characteristics have not been available in the District for a considerable period. As a result the Forest of Dean has been unable to accommodate some of the expansion needs of indigenous companies, or to compete for larger inward investment opportunities. The current position in the District is that no single site of over 2 hectares is available anywhere in the Forest of Dean. This situation inhibits inward investment and also demonstrably affects the investment plans of existing businesses throughout the District, including those in Lydney.
- 1.40 The opportunity to bring forward large, attractive employment sites at Lydney through the provisions of the Local Plan is a key element in the implementation of the revitalisation strategy for the District. The provisions of the Local Plan demonstrate that similar opportunities do not exist elsewhere in the Forest of Dean.
- 1.41 The Plan Review therefore proposes that employment land allocations will be made as part of the site allocation east of Lydney, (R)F.Lydney 1, and at Hurst Farm adjoining and outside the Lydney bypass, (R)F.Lydney 7, and at the western end of the bypass at Mead Lane, (R)F.Lydney 8.
- 1.42 Elsewhere in Lydney there are only limited additional employment land opportunities, principally related to existing industrial areas.
- 1.43 In total some 36.8 hectares of employment land will be allocated by the Plan in Lydney, as follows:
- |                                |   |              |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------|
| (R)F.Lydney 1 [East of Lydney] | - | 9 hectares   |
| (R)F.Lydney 7 [Hurst Farm]     | - | 15 hectares  |
| (R)F.Lydney 8 [Mead Lane]      | - | 7 hectares   |
| (R)F.Lydney 9 [Harbour Rd]     | - | 5.8 hectares |
- 1.44 It is not anticipated that all of this land will be developed over the Plan period. The allocations however will provide the necessary choice of sites required to secure the underlying Plan strategy. The allocations will be reviewed as part of a future Plan review.
- 1.45 One of the considerations in such a Plan Review will be the extent to which new employment has been provided in the town centre, which is expected to generate new and expanded business investment to reflect the forecast growth of Lydney over the Plan period.

## Employment Allocation - Hurst Farm

### (R)F.Lydney 7

A site will be allocated at Hurst Farm to provide for 15 hectares of employment land for primarily B1, B2 and B8 uses. The development will be required to provide:

1. Strategic landscaping to the site boundaries, and within the site
2. Safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links to link to the proposed development to the west of the bypass
3. Bus access and turning facilities
4. A high quality of built development to complement the character and setting of the site.
5. A phased introduction of bus services to the site in relation to the occupation of the site
6. Contributions towards the mitigation of any traffic impacts arising from the development of the site.
7. Appropriate measures to ensuring that flooding does not occur as a result of the new development.

- 1.46 The Hurst Farm site lies outside the Lydney bypass, within an existing agricultural landscape made up of high quality agricultural land, and forms part of the open countryside surrounding Lydney. The advantages gained by the development of the land allocation are considered to outweigh the disadvantages arising from the loss of the land to agriculture, although the impact on individual farm holdings is a material consideration. The bypass currently, and over the Plan period, will function to contain the outward residential expansion of Lydney. There is a need for a cogent strategic justification therefore to provide for development outside the bypass.
- 1.47 One major justification for the Hurst Farm allocation is the strategic necessity to provide for a large scale housing land allocation at Lydney, and provide for complementary employment development at Lydney to balance the housing land allocation, in order to provide a choice of development locations. The site is also intended to make a major contribution to employment opportunities for the whole south Forest. The Hurst Farm site is well located in relation to the proposed development area to the east of Lydney, and will be accessible by a choice of modes of transport through extending the bus services planned for the aforementioned development area, together with extensions to the planned cycling links and pedestrian routes. The scale of the proposed site would potentially accommodate large scale business investment proposals. It also offers the opportunity at a future Plan review to extend the site allocation if required, to provide for the future employment needs of Lydney.
- 1.48 The development east of the bypass will share a common access with the site within the bypass. It may also benefit from being adjacent to the necessary extensions of infrastructure into that development area. These factors should result in improved development viability for this employment site. The high quality surroundings of the site, and its accessibility, would be likely to make this allocation an attractive location for a variety of business uses. These may include technology businesses, service and commercial businesses, as well as other industrial concerns.
- 1.49 Policy (R)F.Lydney 1 provides for 9 hectares of employment land within the site allocated to the east of Lydney.
- 1.50 The site lies close to the existing Cardiff - Birmingham rail line, and within the site is the line of the former railway route which crossed the River Severn. The Council proposes to investigate the potential for a rail freight connection to the Hurst Farm site directly, and the potential for rail freight facilities to the south west of the site at Lydney Station and Harbour Road. The situation will be reviewed when the outcome of these studies are known.

### Employment Allocation - Mead Lane

#### (R)F.Lydney 8

7 hectares of land will be allocated at Mead Lane for employment use, classes B1, B2 and B8. Development will be required to provide:

1. Strategic landscaping to the site boundaries and within the site
2. Bus access and turning within the site
3. Safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links to the surrounding highway network
4. A high quality of built development to complement the character and setting of the site.
5. A phased introduction of bus services to the site in relation to the occupation of the site
6. Contributions towards the mitigation of any traffic impacts arising from the development of the site.

1.51 The Mead Lane site is allocated for employment use in the previous Local Plan (1996). It is a good quality, accessible and potentially attractive site for business investment, suitable for a variety of business use. It is adjoined to the east by two large local employers, being Cromptons and Watts. At various times both companies have expressed some interest in utilising land within the Mead Lane allocated site for expansion purposes, and to provide improved access to their existing sites.

1.52 Over the period since the adoption of the previous Local Plan (1996) the site has not come forward for development. The local authority, and other parties, have explored possible means of bringing forward site development. To date this has not proved possible. There is some lack of certainty about the likely availability of this site over the Plan period.

1.53 However, there are a number of sound reasons why the site should remain as an allocation in the Plan review. These are:

- The site has very good development potential, should it become available
- There is a need for a wide choice of good employment site opportunities in Lydney
- The adjoining industrial businesses could independently pursue an interest in expanding in to the allocated site with access and servicing from the existing developed sites
- The additional employment site allocations in Lydney made in this Plan review may help to establish possible competition between sites, and assist in assessing comparative development costs and viability.

1.54 The site allocation is the same as that shown in the 1996 Plan. However, due to revised advice from the Environment Agency which indicates part of the previously allocated site lies within land liable to flood, the capacity of the site has been reduced to 7 hectares of developable land. In addition the adjacent land lying to the north of the Lydney bypass (Policy Area 3 in the 1996 Local Plan) has not been allocated as it is likely that a substantial part of the site would not be released for development.

### Employment Site to meet a local need - rear of Pine End Works, Harbour Road, Lydney.

#### (R)F.Lydney 9

About 5.8 hectares will be allocated primarily for B1, B2 and B8 purposes in order to facilitate the expansion of adjoining employment uses. The development will be required to provide:

1. Strategic landscaping within the site boundaries, especially to the north eastern part of the site and in advance of the site development .
2. A suitable design which takes into account the nearby Naas House and its setting and does not adversely affect the setting of the harbour.

- 1.55 The above site is allocated in recognition of the need for existing activities on the adjoining land to expand. It is considered suitable for this purpose subject to an appropriate degree of landscaping and a final design that respects both the nearby Naas House (a Grade II\* Listed Building) and the Harbour. The landscaping will need to be a substantial and well designed feature within the site. The Harbour, which is an Ancient Monument is to be the subject of major investment to promote its recreational use as well as its historical importance. The provision of employment land for existing businesses in the District is a high priority of the Council and this policy is intended to facilitate such an expansion. The land concerned is not at this stage considered appropriate for release for speculative development. A development brief will be prepared for this site.

#### **Employment Allocation - Harbour Road**

##### **(R)F.Lydney 10**

Land will be allocated for B1, B2 and B8 employment uses at Harbour Road subject to the following requirements:

1. Employment uses will be limited to occupying only those parts of the site where any approved landfill operation results in areas of land raised above surrounding flooding levels
2. Employment uses will be restricted to those parts of the site directly adjacent to Harbour Road, where immediate access can be gained from Harbour Road and shall not be located elsewhere within the site where they would be likely to be an intrusive feature within the generally open landscape
3. No development shall take place until appropriate measures have been agreed to maintain the flood storage capacity of the site
4. Only B1 uses shall be permitted adjoining Cookson Terrace
5. A strategic landscaping scheme will be required to be submitted and agreed encompassing all projected areas for employment development within the site
6. An appropriate contribution to the improvement of Harbour Road where the vehicle movements arising from development approved under this policy, together with vehicle movements arising from any other planning consents on the site, give rise to the need for such improvements and where necessary towards the mitigation of any traffic impacts arising from the development of the site
7. An appropriate contribution to maintain or improve the biodiversity value of the site.

In assessing proposals for employment development under this policy consideration will be given to the existence of any other planning consents on the site including landfill operations or the winning of materials. Where it is considered that any such approvals, together with the proposal under consideration, would give rise to unacceptable impacts on the amenity of residents adjacent to or near the approaches to the site by virtue of increased traffic movements or by virtue of the nature of the development proposed then permission for development will be refused unless adequate mitigation measures are agreed.

- 1.56 The Harbour Road site is extensive, covering around 23 hectares. However, its potential to accommodate employment development is severely limited, principally because of its important function as a floodwater storage area which assists in protecting built-up areas of Lydney from flooding in adverse conditions. It is of great importance therefore to ensure that any use of this land is accompanied by appropriate measures to safeguard the flood storage capacity of the site.
- 1.57 An area of 1.2 hectares in the south east of the site previously received consent for industrial use, and is currently used for inert waste handling. A more recent consent has been given for the raising of land and the creation of water storage lakes. This latter consent covers around thirty percent of the site and will result in a raised area adjoining Harbour Road of around 1.3 hectares capable of employment use.

- 1.58 The approach to the site via Station Road and Harbour Road passes residential properties. The road is not suitable in its current alignment and condition for accommodating significant additional traffic movements.
- 1.59 Overall therefore it is considered that the allocated site has very limited potential capacity to contribute to employment land supply in Lydney. The need to complete landfill operations, also suggests that any employment development opportunities will only come forward over an extended period.
- 1.60 For the above reasons it is considered that this site cannot be regarded as providing a reliable contribution on any significant scale to employment land availability in Lydney over the Plan period. However, it is appropriate to recognise that some employment re-use is appropriate for land created by virtue of any planning consents granted by the County Council (as the Mineral and Waste Planning Authority). As the policy requirements indicate, the development potential of the site is likely to be very limited.

#### **Other Employment Land in Lydney**

- 1.61 There are a number of well-established industrial sites in Lydney with some remaining capacity to accommodate further development. The Lydney Industrial Estate, on Harbour Road, could potentially provide around 2 hectares of undeveloped land within the site boundaries. Some of this is currently used for outside storage. There is no certainty therefore that it will come forward for development over the Plan period. However, the recent history of the site has demonstrated a continuing capacity for providing additional industrial floorspace and the refurbishment of existing buildings. The site undoubtedly provides a major source of space for a variety of businesses, including smaller uses, start up businesses and overflow capacity for businesses elsewhere in Lydney, in addition to the well-established companies on the site.
- 1.62 The adjoining site to the east was occupied by Lydney Products. The extensive range of buildings on the site, many of variable quality, are not well suited to and exceed in floorspace capacity the needs of the company. There is potential for the redevelopment of parts of the site for employment use, or for refurbishment or re-use by businesses seeking lower cost premises. It is not certain what site availability may come forward over the Plan period. Policy (R)FE.2 provides guidance on the further development of established employment sites.
- 1.63 There is limited undeveloped land adjoining Mead Lane, amounting to around 1 hectare.

#### **Transport**

- 1.64 The completion of the Lydney bypass in 1995 had the desired effect of removing a proportion of traffic from the town centre. Nevertheless, there remain significant volumes of traffic which use town centre roads for local trips within Lydney, and to gain access to other parts of the south Forest area, particularly via Bream Road and Forest Road. Both of these have town centre junctions in the principal shopping area of Newerne Street/Hill Street. Observed traffic volumes (1996) exceeded 10,000 vehicles per day (two-way). Such volumes have a detrimental impact on the town centre environment, pedestrian amenity and safety, and the vitality and viability of the functioning of the town centre.
- 1.65 The County Council has carried out a study of the transport network in Lydney, including an analysis of the impact of the proposed strategic development site to the east of Lydney. The conclusions of that study indicate the need to implement a sustainable transport strategy which would be likely to lead to increased levels of trips by bus, cycling and walking. Such a strategy would be required in any event to provide for a sustainable development pattern to the east of Lydney. It is also required to mitigate the impacts of additional movements arising from the development east of Lydney on the already congested town centre road network.
- 1.66 The 1996 Local Plan contains provisions for a transport network to provide relief for the town centre. Those provisions have been reviewed by the aforementioned study in the context of providing a sustainable transport system as now required by Government advice. As a result, elements of the

adopted Local Plan transport proposals have been modified, or have been confirmed as requirements for implementation, to mitigate the impacts of the proposed strategic development at Lydney.

- 1.67 The Plan review will require that the implementation of the transport network improvements should be funded by the proposed development east of Lydney. The principal requirements are set out in Policy (R)F.Lydney 1, and in paragraph 1.29 above. Further detail will be provided by the development brief accompanying the above allocation.
- 1.68 The policy below identifies land to be safeguarded for the implementation of the highway network improvements.

#### **Safeguarding of Land for Highway Improvements**

<p><b>(R)F.Lydney 11</b> Land will be safeguarded for highway improvements principally in Lydney town centre as shown on the Proposals Map.</p>
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- 1.69 The Proposals Map identifies the land required to implement the principal elements of the proposed town centre road improvements. These will need to be implemented progressively as the development east of Lydney takes place, to mitigate the impacts of the traffic movements arising from that development. The construction of the proposed highway improvements will be complemented by other measures to provide for increased modal choice for locally generated trips. Such measures will include increased frequency and extended routes for local bus services, and provision for safe and convenient walking and cycling routes.
- 1.70 The safeguarded land includes a town centre link route from the Lydney bypass to Hill Street. Funding for this route will not be sought as part of the obligations attached to the development of land to the east of Lydney. However, as that development is implemented, and the associated highway schemes, the operation of the highway network will be monitored to assess its effectiveness. If the monitoring indicates a need to bring forward the town centre link the Council will seek the programming of this improvement in the Local Transport Plan for an appropriate timing in the Plan period.
- 1.71 The development brief for land to the east of Lydney provides greater detail on the highway requirements for Lydney. The proposed timing and phasing of the implementation of the highway proposals and bus service improvements will be negotiated and form part of the comprehensive development agreement for the site.
- 1.72 The implications of the highway proposals will have related benefits for the town centre. These are identified below in the section dealing with the town centre.

#### **Rail Transport - Lydney Station and Adjoining Land**

<p><b>(R)F.Lydney 12</b> Land will be allocated at Lydney Station and adjoining land to accommodate rail related development, including car parking and bus turning for rail users, rail-freight transshipment, and for other uses ancillary to the effective utilisation of Lydney Station and the Dean Forest Railway for passenger, tourism and freight purposes. Only proposals for development related to these purposes will be permitted.</p>
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- 1.73 Lydney has the sole main line railway station in the District. The Dean Forest Railway line has a direct connection to the main line at this point. The present level of stopping train services at Lydney Station is very restricted, and is not conducive to large scale use of the service by residents of the south Forest. Passenger levels may also be affected by the inadequate scale and security of the car parking available, and the lack of passenger facilities such as enclosed waiting rooms, and poor platform access.

- 1.74 The Council is concerned to see improved use of this important transport asset, and has indicated to Railtrack /Network Rail and the rail operating companies its willingness to contribute for example to the cost of improved and secure car parking and bus access. The above policy seeks to reserve the use of this land to provide for such enhancements.
- 1.75 In addition the policy identifies the opportunity for developing rail freight transshipment facilities on land lying between the main rail line and the Dean Forest Railway line. This offers a realistic potential in the District to provide for rail freight transshipment. As such it is considered essential to reserve the land for such rail related uses.
- 1.76 The Dean Forest Railway track connects to the main line at Lydney. This offers significant marketing and development opportunities for rail related tourism development in the District. The DFR route extends to Parkend in the central Forest area.
- 1.77 The allocated site offers potentially significant sustainable transport opportunities for the Forest of Dean of relevance to local passenger and freight movements, and to tourism. For these reasons the allocated land will be reserved solely for rail related development.

#### **Town Centre**

- 1.78 A recent town centres health check study has been undertaken for the Council. The conclusions of the study indicate that Lydney town centre is in a "neutral" state of health, where the indicators give some cause for concern about the ability of the town in its present form to fulfil its potential to serve the needs of its catchment population and retailers/investors. It suggests that action is required to address the negative issues which affect the performance of the town centre.
- 1.79 The above study does identify a number of positive indicators for Lydney. It is the largest of the District centres (both in floorspace and number of retail units), it has the strongest diversity of uses, the lowest proportion of vacancies, sufficient and accessible parking, well established businesses and good pedestrian flow levels. However, there are relatively low levels of satisfaction with the town centre environment on the part of both shoppers and traders, and the latter have mixed views with respect to future trading performance. The study also concludes that the extended linear nature of the centre affects performance, and the pedestrian environment requires improvement to address issues of pedestrian/vehicle conflict and to overcome areas of poor townscape.
- 1.80 In recent years the town centre has experienced new interest in retail investment, primarily related to convenience shopping. The Somerfield store has completed a large extension and a new retail unit has been constructed and occupied in the Newerne Street/Hams Road area. In the same area a planning consent has been given for a retail redevelopment with a frontage to Newerne Street. On the High Street a 2,500m<sup>2</sup> foodstore has recently been completed and appears to be trading well.
- 1.81 At present Lydney captures some trade from both Cinderford and Coleford. However, overall there is a large current outflow of both convenience and comparison goods expenditure from the Lydney catchment area to other centres, particularly Gloucester and Chepstow. There is considerable potential therefore for Lydney town centre to recapture some of this spending, particularly for convenience goods. This potential will be increased by the planned significant increase in new housing in Lydney, which will increase the catchment population for the town centre.
- 1.82 The issues for the Plan with respect to the town centre are therefore to address the town centre environment, by townscape improvements and by traffic management measures to improve the pedestrian environment, to encourage increased levels of activity in what are currently secondary shopping areas within the extended linear nature of the centre, and to ensure opportunities exist for new business investment in the town centre.
- 1.83 The Plan review therefore will propose highway improvements to introduce pedestrian priority into Newerne Street and to allocate sites for town centre development. The Plan will refer to priority areas

for environmental improvements, although proposals to address these areas will be dealt with outside the Local Plan, involving the Lydney Partnership, a broad representative group responsible for developing a local strategy and action plan for the town.

#### **Newerne Street Pedestrian Priority**

**(R)F.Lydney 13**

**Following the construction of the Newerne Street Link and associated works traffic management measures will be implemented to achieve pedestrian priority in Newerne Street to the east of Regent Street.**

- 1.84 The construction of the above works will enable most of Newerne Street to be freed from through traffic. This will enable a programme of works to be implemented in this primary shopping area to establish pedestrian priority. This will undoubtedly lead to an improved town centre environment, and enhance the functioning of the town centre.

#### **Environment and Amenity**

- 1.85 Lydney benefits from a large and mature land area laid out for recreation, amenity and sport which is located to the south of the town centre and easily accessible to a large part of the town population. Most of this area is owned and managed by the Lydney Recreation Trust. In addition there is a Sports Centre located on the Whitecross School site which provides extensive indoor sports facilities, including a recently completed swimming pool, together with excellent outdoor facilities. The range and quality of recreation and sports facilities in Lydney is the best in the District, and in terms of area exceeds the NPFA standards for the existing and projected population of the town over the Plan period. The Plan Review will provide appropriate protection for these areas, primarily through the identification of sites on the Proposals Map as important open areas (Policy (R)FBE.8) and outdoor recreational areas (Policy (R)FBE.10).

- 1.86 To the south of the principal recreational area lies an extensive area of open land which previously was a waste tip. Tipping operations ceased in the 1980's, and the ground has been covered and grassed. It is considered that the ground conditions are unlikely to be suitable for most forms of built development in the short to medium term without extensive and costly measures. Investigations would also be required to establish whether ground disturbance would lead to the release of hazardous gases or material. The site is now traversed east-west by the Lydney bypass. The following policy proposes a suitable use for this land.

#### **Open Space - Land to the South of the Boating Lake**

**(R)F.Lydney 14**

**18.4 hectares of land to the south of the boating lake will be allocated for open space, leisure and recreational uses.**

- 1.87 It is considered that the most feasible future use of this site is for amenity open space, perhaps combined with the provision of more formal leisure and recreational uses such as outdoor pitches. It is likely that the ground conditions will result in only minor built structures on the site, such as pavilions or changing rooms. A small part of the allocated area comprises the remains of the former Lydney Marsh and has a nature conservation value. Proposals for the allocated site therefore should avoid any active recreation use of this part of the site. The Lydney Partnership will consider the potential for undertaking environmental improvement works on this land. In addition footpath and cycle routes may be developed through the site, to link to trip attractors such as Whitecross School, employment sites and the railway station.

## Development at Lydney Harbour

### (R)F.Lydney 15

Land at Lydney Harbour will be allocated for recreation, leisure and tourism use, subject to the following requirements:

1. Proposals must not adversely affect the drainage and flood control functions of the harbour and should where possible enhance them.
2. Proposals must provide for the preservation or enhancement of the Ancient Monument within the site
3. Proposals must not adversely affect the nature conservation interest of the site, the adjoining River Severn, or the Coastal Zone
4. Residential use, and visitor accommodation designed for overnight stay, will not be permitted
5. Public access to this site must be an integral part of any development scheme.

1.88 Lydney Harbour was once active in the handling of cargoes of stone, timber and coal from the Forest of Dean, for onward shipment by vessels gaining access via the Severn Estuary. Commercial use of the harbour for freight has long since ceased. The harbour and its immediate surrounds have been given statutory protection as an Ancient Monument. Public access is an important factor when considering this site and should be maintained.

1.89 The harbour and its associated canal function as a most important element in the management of surface water drainage in relation to Lydney, and in providing flooding protection in relation to the River Severn. It is essential therefore that any development should not detract from these functions, and should where possible enhance them.

1.90 Most of the allocated site is potentially liable to flooding. The Environment Agency (the current site owner) would oppose any significant built development within the Harbour area, particularly for residential purposes. However, it is accepted that the future management of this important historic site requires an active use of the land, for tourism, recreation and leisure. Some building will be permissible within these uses, for a clubhouse, boat workshop or visitor services. Generally however the use of the site will be related to the development of a marina function, together with visitor access and interpretation. Any proposed use must ensure the preservation of the Ancient Monument.

1.91 It is likely that the Environment Agency with its partner organisations, including the Council, will form a Management Trust for the site and will jointly seek funding to implement an agreed Plan for the redevelopment of Lydney Docks. The above policy provides for the form of development agreed as suitable by the partner agencies and is compatible with the work at the harbour which commenced late in 2003.

### **The River Severn Coastal Zone**

1.92 The Severn Estuary is a designated Ramsar Site, Special Protection Area and a possible Special Area of Conservation. Its value for wildlife is thus internationally acknowledged. Development on the coastal hinterland of the Estuary could potentially affect these habitat interests, and thus will be controlled by the relevant policies in the Natural Environment chapter of the Plan dealing with protected sites and habitats, and the Coastal Zone.